

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 TRSE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
SY-05 IO-13 /080 W
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O P 111147Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1568
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMCONSULICARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO WILL REPORTEDLY HOLD DIRECT TALKS WITH OPPOSITION PAKISTAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE LEADERS TODAY. PNA LEADERS, INCLUDING PNA PRESIDENT MUFTI MAHMOOD, MET AT SIHALA MAY 10 AND CONTINUED THEIR DELIBERATIONS ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION. THE SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN MET WITH PNA LEADERS MAY 10, THEN MET WITH THE PM. BESIDE PM'S REAFFIRMATION THAT HE THINKS FOREIGN CONSPIRACY AGAINST PAKISTAN EXISTS, THERE WAS MINIMAL ANTI-AMERICAN
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REPORTAGE IN MAY 11 PAK PRESS WE HAVE SEEN. ON THE SECURITY FRONT POT CONTINUES TO BOIL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER MET REPORTERS MAY 10, AND IN ADDITION TO REITERATING CHARGES OF FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT IN DOMESTIC POLITICS (REPORTED SEPTTEL) SAID HE IS PREPARED TO HOLD DIRECT TALKS WITH PNA LEADERS TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL

SETTLEMENT. "WHEN DID I SAY THAT I AM NOT READY FOR DIRECT TALKS?" HE ASKED THEM. BHUTTO STATED THAT HE HOPES THAT HE AND PNA LEADERS CAN REACH "SOME CONCLUSION" WITHIN A DAY OR TWO. MOST PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS WE RECEIVED MAY 11 REPORT THAT THE PM WILL LIKELY MEET WITH MAULANA MUFTI MAHMOOD AND OTHER PNA LEADERS AT SIHALA MAY 11. PM DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE PNA ASSERTION THAT THEY REMAIN FIRM ON THEIR THREE BASIC DEMANDS (DESPITE THEIR 33 FORMAL PROPOSALS), SAYING HE DID NOT WANT TO MAKE A STATEMENT THAT COULD CREATE FURTHER COMPLICATIONS. ASKED WHEN MARTIAL LAW WOULD END, BHUTTO RESPONDED THAT IF THE OPPOSITION ENDS ITS AGITATION AND BEGINS A DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT, "I DON'T THINK THERE WILL BE ANY NEED FOR MARTIAL LAW." BUT IF THE AGITATION CONTINUES, ARRESTS WILL ALSO CONTINUE.

3. MEANWHILE, PNA PRESIDENT MUFTI MAHMOOD, WHO WAS SUFFERING FROM DIABETES AND A FOOT AILMENT, WAS RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL MAY 10 AND IS BACK AT SIHALA, WHERE PNA LEADERS CONTINUE TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION. PIR OF PAGARO, ACTING PNA PRESIDENT, PLANS TO REMAIN AT SIHALA OVERNIGHT MAY 11 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS. BOTH PNA LEADERS AND THE PRIME MINISTER MET WITH THE SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN, SHAIKH RIYAD-UL-KHATIB, ON MAY 10. HE MET PNA LEADERS FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS AT SIHALA, THEN CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO. PNA LEADERS ARE SAID TO HAVE GIVEN THE AMBASSADOR A COPY OF PIR OF PAGARO'S STATEMENT REJECTING THE IDEA OF THEIR MEETING WITH FEDERAL CABINET MINISTERS TO IRON OUT PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND INSISTING ON TALKS DIRECTLY WITH THE PRIME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINISTER.

4. PRIME MINISTER'S REAFFIRMATION OF EXISTENCE OF FOREIGN CONSPIRACY AGAINST PAKISTAN WAS REPORTED IN ALL NEWSPAPERS WE RECEIVED. OTHERWISE, ARTICLES SLANTED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES REMAINED MINIMAL WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PAKISTAN TIMES. LONG ARTICLE BY COMMENTATOR ZENO ON OPED PAGE CRITICIZES PNA, LINKS THEM WITH "IMPERIALIST CONSPIRACY" AGAINST PAKISTAN, AND IMPLIES THAT CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN FLOODING PAKISTAN WITH MONEY AND ASSISTING THE PNA TO ORGANIZE ITS CAMPAIGN. HE CITES THE USG DECISION TO HALT THE SUPPLY OF TEEJ GAS TO PAKISTAN AS "THE FIRST CLUE" THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS ONE OF THE PARTIES IN THE PAKISTAN CONFLICT. ALLEGED SLUMP IN DOLLAR PRICE IN PAKISTAN IS ANOTHER "PROOF."

5. WE ARE REPEATING TO DEPARTMENT CABLE FROM CONGEN KARACHI REPORTING ON CALL FOR HARTAL AND AGITATION IN

THAT CITY. ALTHOUGH THE SECURITY SITUATION IS CERTAINLY
BETTER COUNTRY WIDE THAN IT WAS RIGHT BEFORE MARTIAL
LAW WAS IMPOSED IN THREE CITIES, ALL IS NOT PEACEFUL.
THE POT CONTINUES TO BOIL AND WE ARE RECEIVING REPORTS
OF CONTINUING SCATTERED PROCESSIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS
IN VARIOUS PARTS OF PAKISTAN. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER
ON THIS DEVELOPMENT LATER THIS WEEK.
CONSTABLE

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